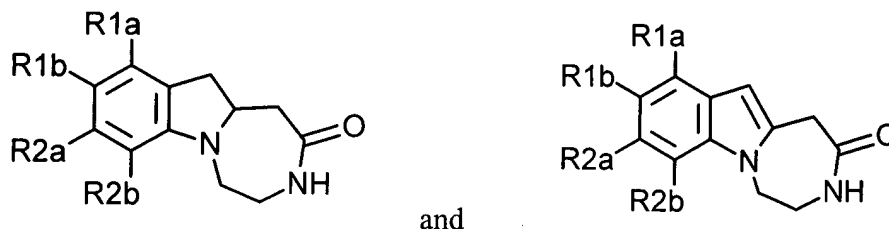


## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

**(1) Please replace the current Abstract with the following new Abstract**

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

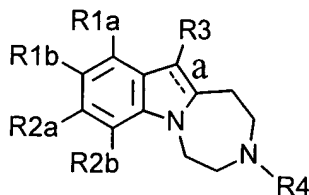
The present invention provides compounds of formula



wherein R1a, R1b, R2a, and R2b are as described herein.

**(2) Please replace the paragraph of formula I on page 3, line 17 to page 5, line 24 with the following paragraph:**

A compound of formula I:



**I**

where a is a single bond or double bond, and where

R1a, R1b, R2a and R2b are each independently

(a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, OR<sub>5</sub>, CONR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub>, COR<sub>5</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, Y(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub> or YC(O)(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, where m = 0-3, Y = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR<sub>6</sub>, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, NR<sub>6</sub>;

(b) (CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; or

(c) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR7, OR7, NR7R8, SR7, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R7, CONR7R8 or NR7COR8; and where

R3 is

(a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, alkyl, Ar, OR5, SR5, CHO, CONR5R6, COR5, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R5, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>XR5, C(O)C(O)XR5, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>C(O)XR5, C(O)(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>XR5, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R6)C(O)R5, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R6)S(O)<sub>2</sub>R5, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R6)C(O)OR5, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R6)C(O)NR5R6 where o = 0 or 1, n = 0-3, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR6 and Y = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O or NR6, where Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR7, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR7, SO<sub>2</sub>R7, SO<sub>2</sub>NR7R8, NR7R8, CONR7R8, NR7COR8, NR7CONR8R9, CO<sub>2</sub>R7, COR7, or R7; or

(b) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR10, OR10, NR10R8, SR10, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R10, CONR10R8 or NR10COR8; and where

R4, R5 and R6 are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR10, OR10, NR10R11, SR10, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R10, CONR10R11 or NR10COR11; or where R5 and R6 are linked to form a 3 to 8 member ring; or

(b) (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR7, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR7, SO<sub>2</sub>R7, SO<sub>2</sub>NR7R8, NR7R8, CONR7R8, NR7COR8, NR7CONR8R9, CO<sub>2</sub>R7, COR7, or R7; and where

R7, R8, and R9 are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl groups, wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>CONR<sub>11</sub>R<sub>12</sub>, or where R7, R8, or R9 are linked to form a ring; or

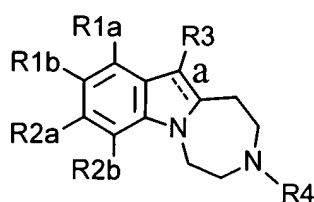
(b) (CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>CONR<sub>11</sub>R<sub>12</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, or R<sub>10</sub>; and where

R<sub>10</sub>, R<sub>11</sub> and R<sub>12</sub> are each independently H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl;

or a stereoisomer or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

**(3) Please replace the paragraph of formula I on page 9, line 1 to page 11, line 27 with the following paragraph:**

A compound of formula I:



**I**

where a is a single bond or double bond, and where

R1a, R1b, R2a and R2b are each independently

(a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, OR<sub>5</sub>, CONR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub>, COR<sub>5</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, Y(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub> or YC(O)(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, where m = 0-3, Y = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR<sub>6</sub>, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, NR<sub>6</sub>;

(b) (CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; or

(c) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub> or NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>; and where

R<sub>3</sub> is

(a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, alkyl, Ar, OR<sub>5</sub>, SR<sub>5</sub>, CHO, CONR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub>, COR<sub>5</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, C(O)C(O)XR<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>C(O)XR<sub>5</sub>, C(O)(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)C(O)R<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)S(O)<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)C(O)OR<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)C(O)NR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub> where o = 0 or 1, n = 0-3, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR<sub>6</sub> and Y = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O or NR<sub>6</sub>, where Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; or

(b) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>8</sub> or NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>; and where

R<sub>4</sub>, R<sub>5</sub> and R<sub>6</sub> are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following:

halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub> or NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>11</sub>; or where R<sub>5</sub> and R<sub>6</sub> are linked to form a 3 to 8 member ring; or

(b) (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; and where

R<sub>7</sub>, R<sub>8</sub>, and R<sub>9</sub> are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl groups, wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>CONR<sub>11</sub>R<sub>12</sub>, or where R<sub>7</sub>, R<sub>8</sub>, or R<sub>9</sub> are linked to form a ring; or

(b) (CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>CONR<sub>11</sub>R<sub>12</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, or R<sub>10</sub>; and where

R<sub>10</sub>, R<sub>11</sub> and R<sub>12</sub> are each independently H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl;

or a stereoisomer or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.